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JUN 23 2009

OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of :
Chien, et al. :
Application No. 10/709,506 : DECISION
Filed/Deposited: 11 May, 2004 :
Attorney Docket No. VASP0004USA :

This is a decision on the petition filed on 1 June, 2009, considered as a petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 (no fee) requesting withdrawal of the holding of abandonment in the above-identified application.

NOTE:

Petitioner is cautioned that the address on the petition is different than that of record.

If Petitioner desires to receive future correspondence regarding this application, the appropriate Notice must be submitted.

A courtesy copy of this decision will be mailed to Petitioner.

However, all future correspondence will be directed to the address of record until such time as appropriate instructions are received to the contrary.

Petitioner, as one registered to practice before the Office, is aware that:

- *submission of a Notice of Change of Address (1 June, 2009) is not a proper substitute for a Revocation/Power of Attorney; and*
- *a proper Revocation/Power of Attorney must be supported by a certificate pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §3.73(b).*

The petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 is **DISMISSED**.

Any request for reconsideration of this decision or any petition in the alternative is to be filed **within two (2) months** from the mail date of this decision. *Note* 37 C.F.R. §1.181(f). The request for reconsideration should include a cover letter and be entitled as a “Renewed Petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 to Withdraw the Holding of Abandonment.”

This is **not** a final agency action within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. §704.

Petitioner may, in the alternative, file a petition (with fee) pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b) with a reply and statement of unintentional delay.

As to the Request to Withdraw
the Holding of Abandonment

Petitioner is directed to the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I) for guidance as to the proper showing and timeliness requirements for relief under 37 C.F.R. §1.181.

Petitioner appears not to comply with the guidance in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I)—as discussed below, Petitioner has failed to satisfy the showing requirements set forth there. Petitioner may find it beneficial to review that material and move step-wise through that guidance in the effort to satisfy the showing requirements (statements and supporting documentation).

BACKGROUND

The record reflects as follows:

Petitioner failed to reply timely and properly to the final Office action (copy enclosed) mailed on 21 April, 2008, with reply due absent extension of time on or before 21 July, 2008.

The application went abandoned by operation of law after midnight 21 July, 2008.

The Office mailed the Notice of Abandonment on 30 October, 2008.

On 1 June, 2009, Petitioner Bruce H. Troxell (Reg. 26,592) (Petitioner) filed, *inter alia*, a petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.181 and an averment of non-receipt, and averred the filing of a Revocation/Power of Attorney on 3 October, 2007. However, Petitioner makes no showing that the Revocation/Power of Attorney submitted at the time constituted a proper submission, in that the record fails to evidence that the Revocation/Power of Attorney was properly supported by a certificate pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §3.73(b). Moreover, while Petitioner protests that he had no Notice that his Revocation/Power of Attorney had not been entered/accepted, the record clearly evidences that the 31 December, 2007, Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment was mailed to the

address of record (Merrifield, VA), and on 9 January, 2008, Petitioner clearly filed a reply thereto.

Thus, Not only did Petitioner fail to perfect the Revocation/Power of Attorney, but he ignored the clear demonstration that no change of representation/address had been entered by the time Petitioner submitted a reply on 9 January, 2008—more than three months before the Examiner mailed the final Office action.

Thus, Petitioner failed to comply with the requirements expressly set forth in the guidance in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I) requiring:

- a copy, *inter alia*, of the Petitioner's/firm due-date docket/calendar and a copy of the docket sheet (or file jacket cover) for the instant application and;
- recitations, *inter alia*, as to a statement of non-receipt "at the correspondence address of record," a statement of search of the file and non-discovery, a description of the docketing system, a statement of system reliability, and other such requirements as set forth in the guidance in the Commentary at MPEP 711.03(c)(I):

The guidance in the Commentary at MPEP 711.03(c)(I) provides in pertinent part:

The showing required to establish nonreceipt of an Office communication must include a statement from the practitioner describing the system used for recording an Office action received at the correspondence address of record with the USPTO. The statement should establish that the docketing system is sufficiently reliable. It is expected that the record would include, but not be limited to, the application number, attorney docket number, the mail date of the Office action and the due date for the response.

Practitioner must state that the Office action was not received at the correspondence address of record, and that a search of the practitioner's record(s), including any file jacket or the equivalent, and the application contents, indicates that the Office action was not received. A copy of the record(s) used by the practitioner where the non-received Office action would have been entered had it been received is required.

A copy of the practitioner's record(s) required to show non-receipt of the Office action should include the master docket for the firm. That is, if a three month period for reply was set in the nonreceived Office action, a copy of the master docket report showing all replies docketed for a date three months from the mail date of the nonreceived Office action must be submitted as documentary proof of nonreceipt of the Office action. If no such master docket exists, the practitioner should so state and provide other evidence such as, but not limited to, the following: the application file jacket; incoming mail log;

calendar; reminder system; or the individual docket record for the application in question.¹

Petitioner is requested to review the requirements as set forth in the guidance in the Commentary at MPEP 711.03(c)(I), and then seek to satisfy those requirements.

If, as it appears, Petitioner cannot satisfy the required showing pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.181, Petitioner may, in the alternative, file a petition to revive pursuant to the regulations at 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b)—requirements include petition, petition fee, reply (to the Office action) and a terminal disclaimer and fee where appropriate. Petitioner should review the current fee schedule at the Office website for fees due at the time of filing.

Out of an abundance of caution, Petitioners always are reminded that the filing of a petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 does not toll any periods that may be running any action by the Office and a petition seeking relief under the regulation must be filed within two (2) months of the act complained of (*see*: 37 C.F.R. §1.181(f)), and those registered to practice and all others who make representations before the Office are reminded to inquire into the underlying facts of representations made to the Office and support averments with the appropriate documentation—since all owe to the Office the continuing duty to disclose.²

The availability of applications and application papers online to applicants/practitioners who diligently associate their Customer Number with the respective application(s) now provides an applicant/practitioner on-demand information as to events/transactions in an application.

STATUTES, REGULATIONS

Congress has authorized the Commissioner to "revive an application if the delay is shown to the satisfaction of the Commissioner to have been "unavoidable." 35 U.S.C. §133 (1994). And the regulations at 37 C.F.R. §1.137(a) and (b) set forth the requirements for a Petitioner to revive a previously unavoidably or unintentionally, respectively, abandoned application.^{3, 4}

¹ See: MPEP §711.03(c)(I)(A).

² See supplement of 17 June, 1999. The Patent and Trademark Office is relying on Petitioner's duty of candor and good faith and accepting a statement made by Petitioner. See *Changes to Patent Practice and Procedure*, 62 Fed. Reg. at 53160 and 53178, 1203 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office at 88 and 103 (responses to comments 64 and 109)(applicant obligated under 37 C.F.R. §10.18 to inquire into the underlying facts and circumstances when providing statements to the Patent and Trademark Office).

³ See: *Changes to Patent Practice and Procedure; Final Rule Notice*, 62 Fed. Reg. at 53158-59 (October 10, 1997), 1203 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office at 86-87 (October 21, 1997).

⁴ The language of 35 U.S.C. §133 and 37 C.F.R. §1.137(a) is clear, unambiguous, and without qualification: the delay in tendering the reply to the outstanding Office action, as well as filing the first petition seeking revival, must have been unavoidable for the reply now to be accepted on petition. (Therefore, by example, an unavoidable delay in the payment of the Filing Fee might occur if a reply is shipped by the US Postal Service, but due to catastrophic accident, the delivery is not made.) Delays in responding properly raise the question whether delays are unavoidable. Where there is a question whether the delay was unavoidable, Petitioners must meet the burden of establishing that the delay was unavoidable within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §133 and 37 C.F.R. §1.137(a) And the Petitioner must be diligent in attending to the matter. Failure to do so does not constitute the care required under Pratt, and so cannot satisfy the test for diligence and due care. (By contrast,

Moreover, the Office has set forth in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I) the showing and timeliness requirements for a proper showing for relief under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 in these matters.

Decisions on reviving abandoned applications on the basis of “unavoidable” delay have adopted the reasonably prudent person standard in determining if the delay was unavoidable:

The word ‘unavoidable’ . . . is applicable to ordinary human affairs, and requires no more or greater care or diligence than is generally used and observed by prudent and careful men in relation to their most important business. It permits them in the exercise of this care to rely upon the ordinary and trustworthy agencies of mail and telegraph, worthy and reliable employees, and such other means and instrumentalities as are usually employed in such important business. If unexpectedly, or through the unforeseen fault or imperfection of these agencies and instrumentalities, there occurs a failure, it may properly be said to be unavoidable, all other conditions of promptness in its rectification being present.⁵

Allegations as to the Request to
Withdraw the Holding of Abandonment

The guidance in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I) specifies the showing required and how it is to be made and supported.

Petitioner appears not to have made the showing required.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, The petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 is dismissed.

ALTERNATIVE VENUE

Should Petitioner wish to revive the application, Petitioner may wish to properly file a petition to the Commissioner requesting revival of an application abandoned due to unintentional delay under 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b). (See: http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/pac/mpep/documents/0700_711_03_c.htm#sect711.03c)

unintentional delays are those that do not satisfy the very strict statutory and regulatory requirements of unavoidable delay, and also, by definition, are not intentional.))

⁵ In *re Mattullath*, 38 App. D.C. 497, 514-15 (1912)(quoting *Ex parte Pratt*, 1887 Dec. Comm’r Pat. 31, 32-33 (1887)); see also *Winkler v. Ladd*, 221 F. Supp. 550, 552, 138 USPQ 666, 167-68 (D.D.C. 1963), *aff’d*, 143 USPQ 172 (D.C. Cir. 1963); *Ex parte Henrich*, 1913 Dec. Comm’r Pat. 139, 141 (1913). In addition, decisions on revival are made on a “case-by-case basis, taking all the facts and circumstances into account.” *Smith v. Mossinghoff*, 671 F.2d 533, 538, 213 USPQ 977, 982 (D.C. Cir. 1982). Finally, a petition cannot be granted where a petitioner has failed to meet his or her burden of establishing that the delay was “unavoidable.” *Haines v. Quigg*, 673 F. Supp. 314, 316-17, 5 USPQ2d 1130, 1131-32 (N.D. Ind. 1987).

A petition to revive on the grounds of unintentional delay must be filed promptly and such petition must be accompanied by the reply, the petition fee, a terminal disclaimer and fee where appropriate and a statement that “the entire delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the reply until the filing of a grantable petition was unintentional.” (The statement is in the form available online.)

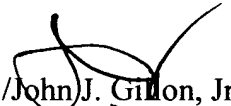
Further correspondence with respect to this matter should be addressed as follows:

By Mail: Mail Stop PETITION
 Commissioner for Patents
 P. O. Box 1450
 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

By hand: U. S. Patent and Trademark Office
 Customer Service Window, Mail Stop Petitions
 Randolph Building
 401 Dulany Street
 Alexandria, VA 22314

By facsimile: **(571) 273-8300**
 Attn: Office of Petitions

Telephone inquiries regarding this decision may be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3214—it is noted, however, that all practice before the Office is in writing (see: 37 C.F.R. §1.2⁶) and the proper authority for action on any matter in this regard are the statutes (35 U.S.C.), regulations (37 C.F.R.) and the commentary on policy (MPEP). Therefore, no telephone discussion may be controlling or considered authority for Petitioner's action(s).


/John J. Gillon, Jr./
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⁶ The regulations at 37 C.F.R. §1.2 provide:

§1.2 Business to be transacted in writing.

All business with the Patent and Trademark Office should be transacted in writing. The personal attendance of applicants or their attorneys or agents at the Patent and Trademark Office is unnecessary. The action of the Patent and Trademark Office will be based exclusively on the written record in the Office. No attention will be paid to any alleged oral promise, stipulation, or understanding in relation to which there is disagreement or doubt.